

CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS  
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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

**Scott Johnson**

Plaintiff,

v.

**Silicon Valley Association of  
Realtors**, a California Nonprofit  
Corporation

Defendants.

**Case No.**

**Complaint For Damages And  
Injunctive Relief For Violations  
Of: Americans With Disabilities  
Act; Unruh Civil Rights Act**

Plaintiff Scott Johnson complains of Silicon Valley Association of Realtors, a California Nonprofit Corporation; and alleges as follows:

**PARTIES:**

1. Plaintiff is a California resident with physical disabilities. Plaintiff is a level C-5 quadriplegic. He cannot walk and also has significant manual dexterity impairments. He uses a wheelchair for mobility and has a specially equipped van.

2. Defendant Silicon Valley Association of Realtors owned the real property located at or about 10050 Bubb Rd, Cupertino, California, upon

1 which “Cupertino Medical Laser Center” operates, in February 2021.

2 3. Defendant Silicon Valley Association of Realtors owns the real property  
3 located at or about 10050 Bubb Rd, Cupertino, California, upon which  
4 “Cupertino Medical Laser Center” operates, currently.

5 4. Plaintiff does not know the true names of Defendants, their business  
6 capacities, their ownership connection to the property and business, or their  
7 relative responsibilities in causing the access violations herein complained of,  
8 and alleges a joint venture and common enterprise by all such Defendants.  
9 Plaintiff is informed and believes that each of the Defendants herein is  
10 responsible in some capacity for the events herein alleged, or is a necessary  
11 party for obtaining appropriate relief. Plaintiff will seek leave to amend when  
12 the true names, capacities, connections, and responsibilities of the Defendants  
13 are ascertained.

14  
15 **JURISDICTION & VENUE:**

16 5. The Court has subject matter jurisdiction over the action pursuant to 28  
17 U.S.C. § 1331 and § 1343(a)(3) & (a)(4) for violations of the Americans with  
18 Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.

19 6. Pursuant to supplemental jurisdiction, an attendant and related cause  
20 of action, arising from the same nucleus of operative facts and arising out of  
21 the same transactions, is also brought under California’s Unruh Civil Rights  
22 Act, which act expressly incorporates the Americans with Disabilities Act.

23 7. Venue is proper in this court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) and is  
24 founded on the fact that the real property which is the subject of this action is  
25 located in this district and that Plaintiff's cause of action arose in this district.

26  
27 **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS:**

28 8. Plaintiff went to Cupertino Medical Laser Center in February 2021 with

1 the intention to avail himself of its goods or services motivated in part to  
2 determine if the defendants comply with the disability access laws. Not only  
3 did Plaintiff personally encounter the unlawful barriers in February 2021, but  
4 he wanted to return and patronize the business several more times but was  
5 specifically deterred due to his actual personal knowledge of the barriers  
6 gleaned from his encounter with them.

7 9. Cupertino Medical Laser Center is a facility open to the public, a place  
8 of public accommodation, and a business establishment.

9 10. Unfortunately, on the date of the plaintiff's visit, the defendants failed  
10 to provide wheelchair accessible parking in conformance with the ADA  
11 Standards as it relates to wheelchair users like the plaintiff.

12 11. Cupertino Medical Laser Center provides parking to its customers but  
13 fails to provide wheelchair accessible parking.

14 12. A couple of problems that plaintiff encountered is that there were no  
15 van-accessible parking spaces that served Cupertino Medical Laser Center  
16 and of the two standard stalls marked and reserved for persons with  
17 disabilities that did serve Cupertino Medical Laser Center only one had an  
18 access aisle that accompanied the ADA parking stall.

19 13. Plaintiff believes that there are other features of the parking that likely  
20 fail to comply with the ADA Standards and seeks to have fully compliant  
21 parking available for wheelchair users.

22 14. On information and belief the defendants currently fail to provide  
23 wheelchair accessible parking.

24 15. These barriers relate to and impact the plaintiff's disability. Plaintiff  
25 personally encountered these barriers.

26 16. As a wheelchair user, the plaintiff benefits from and is entitled to use  
27 wheelchair accessible facilities. By failing to provide accessible facilities, the  
28 defendants denied the plaintiff full and equal access.

1 17. The failure to provide accessible facilities created difficulty and  
2 discomfort for the Plaintiff.

3 18. The defendants have failed to maintain in working and useable  
4 conditions those features required to provide ready access to persons with  
5 disabilities.

6 19. The barriers identified above are easily removed without much  
7 difficulty or expense. They are the types of barriers identified by the  
8 Department of Justice as presumably readily achievable to remove and, in fact,  
9 these barriers are readily achievable to remove. Moreover, there are numerous  
10 alternative accommodations that could be made to provide a greater level of  
11 access if complete removal were not achievable.

12 20. Plaintiff will return to Cupertino Medical Laser Center to avail himself  
13 of its goods or services and to determine compliance with the disability access  
14 laws once it is represented to him that Cupertino Medical Laser Center and its  
15 facilities are accessible. Plaintiff is currently deterred from doing so because  
16 of his knowledge of the existing barriers and his uncertainty about the  
17 existence of yet other barriers on the site. If the barriers are not removed, the  
18 plaintiff will face unlawful and discriminatory barriers again.

19 21. Given the obvious and blatant nature of the barriers and violations  
20 alleged herein, the plaintiff alleges, on information and belief, that there are  
21 other violations and barriers on the site that relate to his disability. Plaintiff will  
22 amend the complaint, to provide proper notice regarding the scope of this  
23 lawsuit, once he conducts a site inspection. However, please be on notice that  
24 the plaintiff seeks to have all barriers related to his disability remedied. See  
25 *Doran v. 7-11*, 524 F.3d 1034 (9th Cir. 2008) (holding that once a plaintiff  
26 encounters one barrier at a site, he can sue to have all barriers that relate to his  
27 disability removed regardless of whether he personally encountered them).

**I. FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990** (On behalf of Plaintiff and against all Defendants.) (42 U.S.C. section 12101, et seq.)

22. Plaintiff re-pleads and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth again herein, the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs of this complaint.

23. Under the ADA, it is an act of discrimination to fail to ensure that the privileges, advantages, accommodations, facilities, goods and services of any place of public accommodation is offered on a full and equal basis by anyone who owns, leases, or operates a place of public accommodation. See 42 U.S.C. § 12182(a). Discrimination is defined, inter alia, as follows:

- a. A failure to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices, or procedures, when such modifications are necessary to afford goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or accommodations to individuals with disabilities, unless the accommodation would work a fundamental alteration of those services and facilities. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(ii).
- b. A failure to remove architectural barriers where such removal is readily achievable. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iv). Barriers are defined by reference to the ADA Standards.
- c. A failure to make alterations in such a manner that, to the maximum extent feasible, the altered portions of the facility are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities, including individuals who use wheelchairs or to ensure that, to the maximum extent feasible, the path of travel to the altered area and the bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the altered area, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities. 42 U.S.C. § 12183(a)(2).

1       24. When a business provides parking for its customers, it must provide  
2 accessible parking.

3       25. Here, accessible parking has not been provided in conformance with the  
4 ADA Standards.

5       26. The Safe Harbor provisions of the 2010 Standards are not applicable  
6 here because the conditions challenged in this lawsuit do not comply with the  
7 1991 Standards.

8       27. A public accommodation must maintain in operable working condition  
9 those features of its facilities and equipment that are required to be readily  
10 accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. 28 C.F.R. § 36.211(a).

11       28. Here, the failure to ensure that the accessible facilities were available  
12 and ready to be used by the plaintiff is a violation of the law.

13  
14 **II. SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF THE UNRUH CIVIL**  
15 **RIGHTS ACT** (On behalf of Plaintiff and against all Defendants.) (Cal. Civ.  
16 Code § 51-53.)

17       29. Plaintiff repleads and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth  
18 again herein, the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs of this  
19 complaint. The Unruh Civil Rights Act (“Unruh Act”) guarantees, inter alia,  
20 that persons with disabilities are entitled to full and equal accommodations,  
21 advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishment of  
22 every kind whatsoever within the jurisdiction of the State of California. Cal.  
23 Civ. Code § 51(b).

24       30. The Unruh Act provides that a violation of the ADA is a violation of the  
25 Unruh Act. Cal. Civ. Code, § 51(f).

26       31. Defendants’ acts and omissions, as herein alleged, have violated the  
27 Unruh Act by, inter alia, denying, or aiding, or inciting the denial of, Plaintiff’s  
28 rights to full and equal use of the accommodations, advantages, facilities,

1 privileges, or services offered.

2 32. Because the violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act resulted in difficulty,  
3 discomfort or embarrassment for the plaintiff, the defendants are also each  
4 responsible for statutory damages, i.e., a civil penalty. (Civ. Code § 55.56(a)-  
5 (c).)

6 33. Although the plaintiff encountered frustration and difficulty by facing  
7 discriminatory barriers, even manifesting itself with minor and fleeting  
8 physical symptoms, the plaintiff does not value this very modest physical  
9 personal injury greater than the amount of the statutory damages.

10  
11 **PRAYER:**

12 Wherefore, Plaintiff prays that this Court award damages and provide  
13 relief as follows:

14 1. For injunctive relief, compelling Defendants to comply with the  
15 Americans with Disabilities Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act. Note: the  
16 plaintiff is not invoking section 55 of the California Civil Code and is not  
17 seeking injunctive relief under the Disabled Persons Act at all.


18 2. For equitable nominal damages for violation of the ADA. See  
19 *Uzuegbunam v. Preczewski*, --- U.S. ---, 2021 WL 850106 (U.S. Mar. 8, 2021)  
20 and any other equitable relief the Court sees fit to grant.

21 3. Damages under the Unruh Civil Rights Act, which provides for actual  
22 damages and a statutory minimum of \$4,000 for each offense.

23 4. Reasonable attorney fees, litigation expenses and costs of suit, pursuant  
24 to 42 U.S.C. § 12205; and Cal. Civ. Code §§ 52.

1 Dated: March 17, 2021

CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS

2  
3 By:   
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5 Amanda Seabock, Esq.  
6 Attorney for plaintiff  
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